10/4/77

Dear Judy and Jim,

I was so glad to hear from you last night and my mind then was so much on other matters I completely forgot something I'd intended writing Jim about. Of course I was also pleased that you found the affidavit to be of worth.

When you phoned I was in the middle of a delicate letter to a psychiatrist who has an interest in the CIA's records on their mind-bending work, hopefully of the past. I had hoped to meet this man this week but as when I was down there in June developments forced me to end my trip to the west coast at mid-point: the other people I hoped to see had to be away. I was on to this nefarious species of "patriotism" years ago because of a secret Warren Commission record I obtained. Then it turned out that the man who was killed, perhaps the first known of those killed in these experiments, was a local man whose older son I knew when he was in high school. So, because it seems to have some relationship to the major thrust of my work I decided to obtain all that I could not for my own present writing but to leave as an archive for the future, available to all. But it is costing! I have thousands of pages already and have given others access to them. Those I think will not draw crazy conclusions. But at the time the financial drain got to be too heavy the CIA started to stonewall and withhold these records. I can't press them to live within the law until I can pay the charges for the copies, about $2,000 for what I do not have. So, when you called, I was asking the doctor to whom I've psoken but have never met, the one to whom I've given copies of all I've received, if ~~ya~~ he would advance the cost of my getting the copies so I could copy them before sending them on to him instead of the other way around as it has been to now. It was, for me at least, a delicate matter and my mind was much on it when the phone rang.

One of the things I'd planned for when I was there in June and was not able to get to because I went to New York was to try to find and speak to Dr. Tom Shires to see if he would give me a simple affidavit to use in this case. It is about this that I'd intended to write supersalesman Jim.

I'll explain, beginning with the suggestion that you read the excerpt from his deposition I have on p. 174 of Whitewash.

Dr. Shires was chief of surgery but he was at a medical meeting, I think in Galveston. He was rushed back and although he was not in on the Connally surgery, at least not at the outset, he was the doctor in charge of Connally's case and recovery. Specter deposed him in Dallas. I believe that because Specter did not like what Dr. Shires was really saying he saw to it that Dr. Shires was not called before the Commission members. One of the things Specter did not like is this quote from Shires' testimony. I believe there is more and that Specter did not find it possible to turn Shires around, as when Shires expressed confidence in Connally's awareness when Connally recounted what he recalled. Connally's recollections counter the Report's conclusions.

So, at the least or minimu, an affidavit from Shires stating what this excerpt from his testimony states, would be helpful in this case because from the official account of the crime that fragment in Connally's chest, mentioned nowhere in the Report or anywhere else in the 26 volumes, has to have come from Bullet 399. This bears very hard on the testing and comparisons of test results the reports of which I seek in this Freedom of Information suit, again not for my writing because I'll not have time to write more on that aspect but to make available to all the people, free, and in the interest of establishing truth and fact.

I believe Dr. Shires may know more and I am more of the belief that from his professional experience he may have opinions that should weigh heavily before an honest court. One is whether or not there were or could or should have been other fragments that were lost either as the bullet left the chest or in cleansing the wound. My interest here is in presenting to the court evidence or weight loss by Bullet 399. And in this connection any estimate Shires can now provide of either the size or the weight of the fragment he saw in the X-rays. Here, whether or not for him, you may want to go over again what I have in Post Mortem in the Commission efforts to avoid the significance of the fragment in Connally's thigh

by seeing to it that they had X-rays without Parkland's honest interpretation of them. I don't know if Shires has or had records that would show what I'm interested in learning and presenting to the court. Specter cut all of that off and out of the record.

So, and now I have to rush having had a call from a student who is coming for help, I'd like Jim to ask Shires, if he is still there, if he is willing to provide an affidavit that can be as simple as this excerpt from his testimony and if there is more that he knows that can be relevant to the amount of metal in that or other wounds because this relates very much not only to the tests that were required but to motive in withholding them when I've been trying to get them for more than 12 years.

If he is unwilling to talk let me know, don't push him. I'll see if I can get someone else to put in a good word and then try again.

I've heard nothing from Buddy Walthers' or Alan Sweatt's widows so I suppose that on their own they are reluctant to get involved. Neither letter was returned so I know they were received. I also know I had the correct addresses.

I've also tried, through someone I also did not have time to look up, that Judge Brown's newer wife has what records he had and the son did not and could not get them. The son is a lawyer and is known to this other friend, who did speak to him.

If there had been time I had wanted to speak to Drs. Gregory and Jenkins. Jenkins did speak to friends and associates and his family at the time of the crime. If I can get down there again and not be interrupted perhaps I can make efforts with them. The time Perry and Carico spoke to me I ran out of time and money.

I will probably be interrupted in the word I'm taking an older and more experienced person's liberty in addressing to those two beautiful and promising young women you have down there who have made decisions about continuing their formal education so reminiscent of my own experience and my own errors when I was their age. It was a little different with me because that was in the Great Depression days, my father had died, and I had to help the family as the only son and the oldest child. I did not finish college. There were times when I could have done this at night but I failed to do it. Later, after World War II, I did try and it was not possible. I've regretted it much.

In my own case I will not put those fine young ladies on by misrepresenting to them. I do not believe that if I had obtained my degree it would have made any difference in my earning capacity. I also will not misrepresent to them and tell them it would have prepared me for what I am not prepared for. Nor that I can atttibute any penny I've ever earned to what I did learn in college. There are other reasons that for most people, especially women, a college degree is in today's world a minimum need. I do not know what if anything you have told them but I hope, even if I repeat, that they will consider what I suggest to them.

The modern world is one in which those of their age who do not have doubts and are not troubled have to have something wrong with them. The world is not as it should be. The problems their generation faces should not exist. If your girls were without doubts and troubles there would be something wrong with them. If they have doubts and are troubled it is a good sign, a sign that whether or not they have been able to put it all together, given their as yet limited experience with life as it is, they cannot accept what really is not acceptable to good people. The worry I have is that based on what they may not recognize as experience that is too limited they may make wrong decisions, as I did, and come to regret them later and find, as I did, that it then is not possible to rectify them.

Faced with decisions it may appear easier to them to quit school and go to work and expdct that marriage and a family are not far away. If this is the case and if they have long andhappy marriages and never work outside the home there is a better than good chance that in time they will miss not having completed college, miss what one learns in college, most people go place else, and that their children in turn will be limited by what they cannot impart to the children not having acquired it themselves.

However, the marriages that do not survive have come to be a large part of all marriages. When this happens the women are only too often at a great disadvantage in making their own ways and starting new lives. If they have children this is greatly -

magnified because in virtually all cases the responsibility for t e children falls on women. Even if they are fortunate and do not have financial burdens, which is not true in most cases, it is extremely difficult for womnn then. ,t is much more difficult if they are not prepared to follow careers that in and of themselves are rewarding and can produce a good income.

Another consequence of women not being well prepared for independence is that the time can come when they want to be independent or are forced to try to be and are not able to be. Under such conditions a college degree is virtually a minimum today, what a high-school education was four or five decades ago. Those who can make good livings today and have some security in it and do not have good formal educations are a small and exceptional minority of those who have special talents and have learned to use them. In such cases it is generally after some considerable difficulty. ,t does not often come either spontaneously or easily.

I have known many women whose lives were suddely empty when their children grew up and left home and started lives of their own. The husband was working all day and aside from keeping the house there was little for them to do. They were not prepared for assuming worthwhile employment, work they find interesting. I have also know those eho were virtually reborn when they no longer had the responsibility for their growing children and, with ~~chpp~~ happy marriages, found worthwhile ways of spending their days in useful jobs. To avoid the emptiness that can come preparation at a younger age is really necessary. It is not wasy as some of our friends are doing, going back to college with children or after the children are grown, especially if the marriage has broken. We are having dinner tonight with friends where the woman has only recently completed college and is now ing graduate school. With three kids it has been and is rough on her. Another friend who is an exceptional man has found it possible to shift his work to nights so that when the third child, an infant, is old enough his wife can return to college for the year here degree requires. But this will not be nearly as easyfor her as if she had delayed the first child for that year.

Aside from the many practical considerations which have universal application among those suited for college and without another skill, like say a legal secretary, there is the broadening of the cultural base that can come from a goodliberal arts education hwteher or not it is designed to make better employment possible. Life is fuller and richer with this to draw upon. This is something we do not readily see when we are young, impatient, at loose ends and often feeling the rushing of hot blood.

Oneof the few advantages of accumulating years is the accumulations of experiences on which one can draw. One of the disadvantages is that it often is not possible to communicate the meaning of these experiences to those who are younger. I do hope those two very promising young women can give their futures dispassionate and deep consideration at this time when, whether or not they can now recognize it, they are determining and controlling much of what their futures can be. I wish them all of and only the best,

as I do all of you, Excuse the haste and typos.